LOWER COLUMBIA COLLEGE

Tuesday, August 21, 2012

**Organization and Departmental Context (Culture): Synthesis of Recommendations**

1. Focused time and space for collaboration (purposeful, inclusive, consistent, with protocols) – working together toward goals.
   * We feel that this is an important goal and we currently do a pretty good job of achieving it. Informal quarterly meetings have been quite successful. In our context, formal meetings are not generally the best way to go. Informal meetings are much more well attended and productive.
   * Inclusion of adjuncts in department activities is obviously important. Previously, the attitude was generally that adjuncts were lucky to be employed and therefore not treated well. New department leadership likes to operate under the assumption that we are lucky to have the adjuncts and their needs should be addressed.
2. Faculty driven informed data gathering and evidence based decisions
   * Data is requested from the IR office by both the administration and the department. While the questions are often different, the data collect is generally the same. We have found it beneficial to include a narrative with data explaining background and possible inferences prior to sharing with the administration.
3. Ongoing professional learning opportunities that honor professional judgment of faculty
   * We definitely need more math education focused professional development activities. Some faculty have gone to different local workshops and courses, but this is inconsistent. Adjuncts are generally unaware of funds available to support such activities.
4. Trusting environment with increased transparency and clarity in communications regarding learning processes and results. “It’s about the students.”
   * Not sure how this can be accomplished in a realistic way.
5. Culture of improvement and innovation – open to making mistakes and learning from them.
   * Informal department end of quarter meetings are centered on this topic specifically. Future meetings planned to review results of common end of pre-college math.
6. Giving administrators a real “window to the work” (concrete evidence) - building relationships, open and explicit communications (think broadly about key administrators)
   * Department chair keeps the dean in the loop through constant emails and meetings. Being a smaller college allows for better direct access to campus administration.